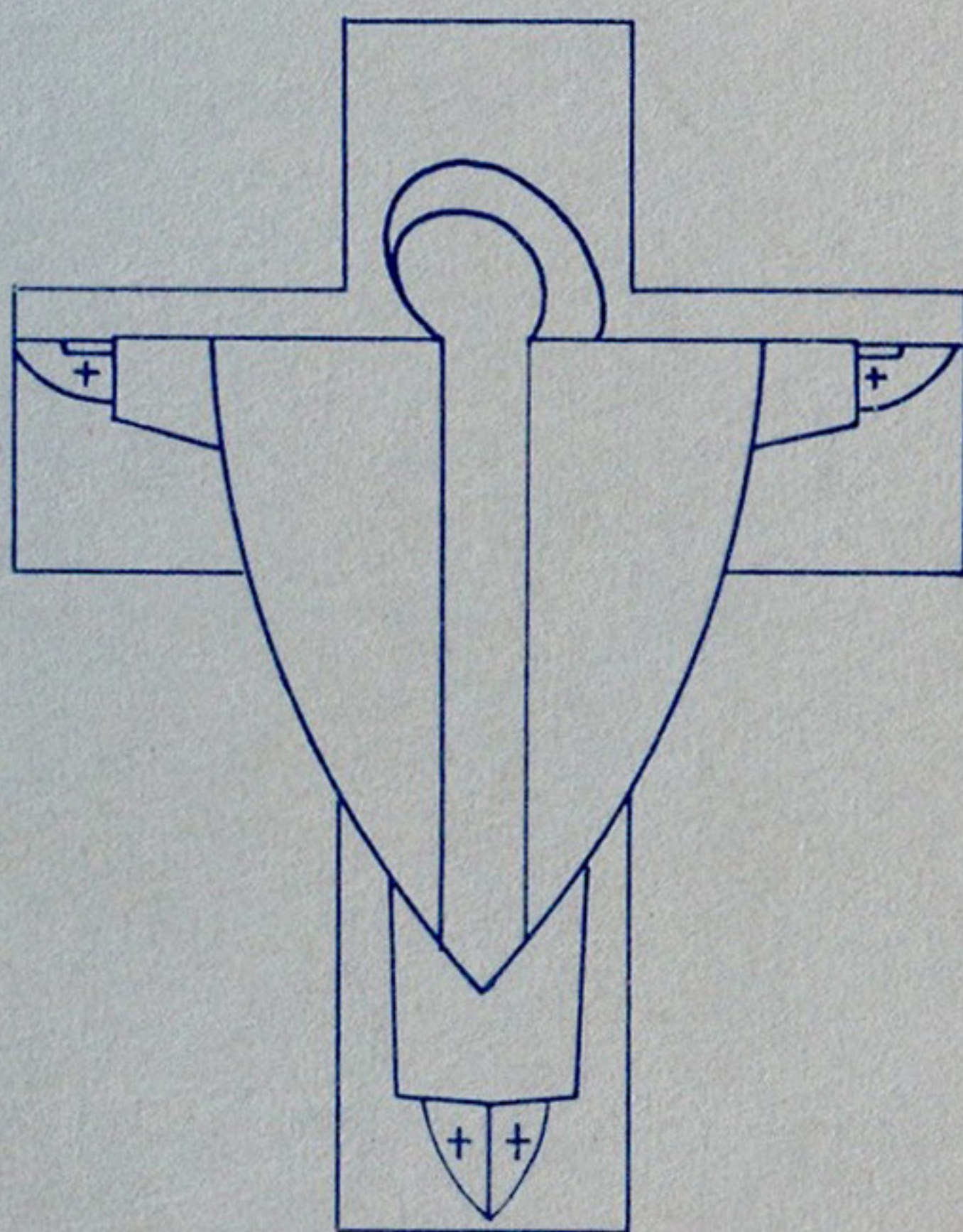


SERVING:AT  
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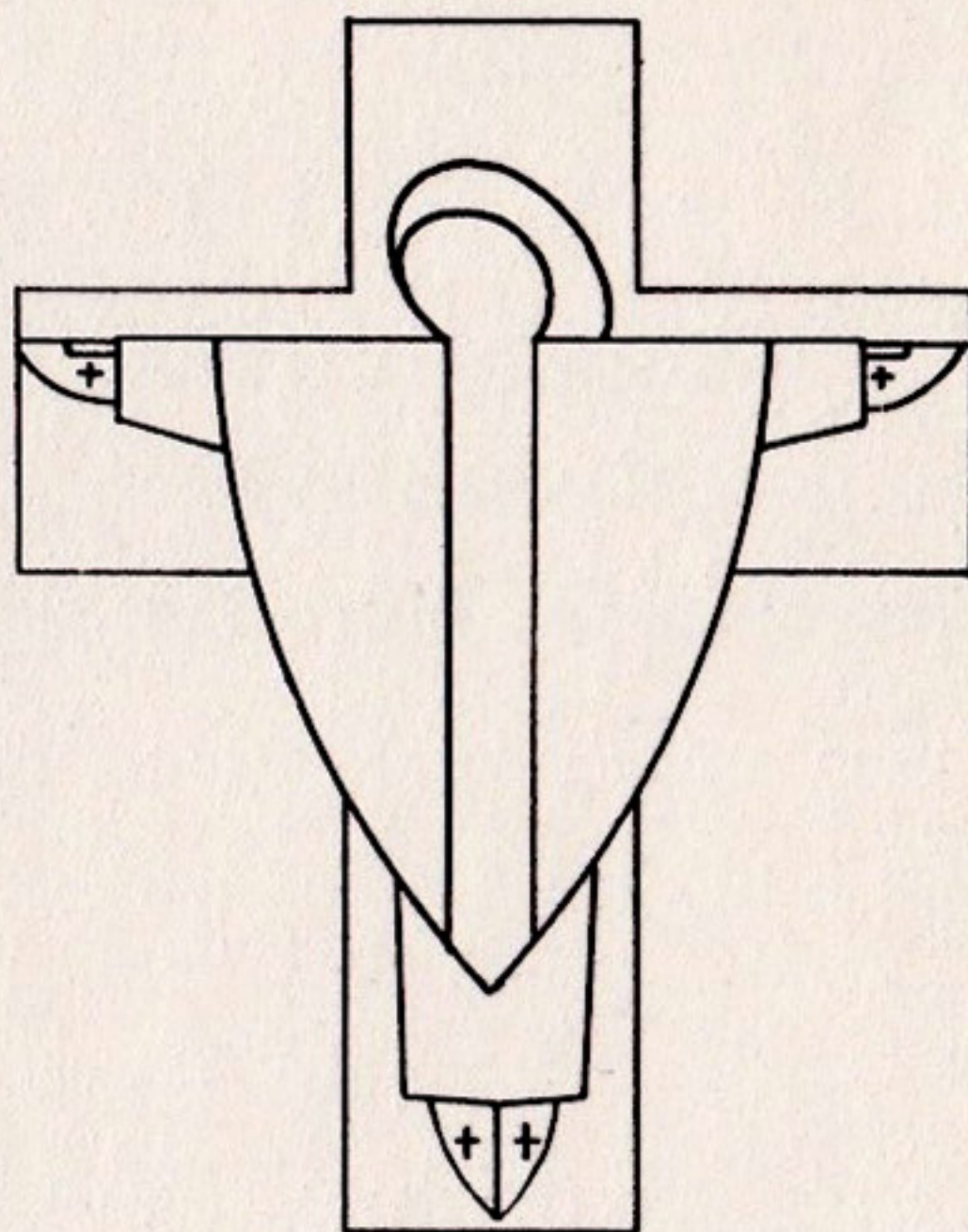
CHURCH OF SAINT MARY  
THE VIRGIN - N - Y - C







# SERVING:AT THE : ALTAR



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY  
THE VIRGIN -N-Y-C



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Revised 1959

Church of St. Mary the Virgin



## PREFACE

This book is in every way possible an offering of love to the Divine Saviour at whose altars its editors have been privileged to serve. It is an attempt to set down clearly and explicitly the standard for serving Low Mass at the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin in New York City.

All of the directions and illustrations contained in this book have been based upon the best available authorities, both Anglican and Roman; but the editors have striven earnestly to avoid both the unnecessary shortcuts and innovations that have crept into many texts (and into much usage) and also the precious air of over-precision that some authorities seem to consider essential to the Catholic "norm." Fussiness has, or should have, no part in the Divine Liturgy.

The editors hope that their errors herein have been few. They are more grateful than they can say to the many who have assisted, directly and indirectly, in this work. And they hope that all who read these pages will find them helpful.

This book was originally prepared for use at the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin. Since considerable interest has been shown by other parishes, the editors have made some revisions to make the directions more adaptable to general use.

There will be variations for local custom and every server who reads this book should understand that its use in whole or in part should be only with the approval of his parish priest.



## KEY TO SYMBOLS



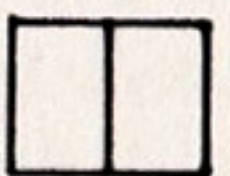
— Celebrant



— Server



— Crucifer



— Missal



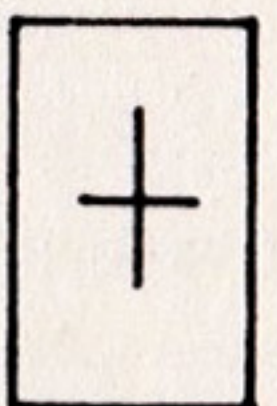
— Bride



— Groom



— Thurible & Holy Water Stand



— Coffin (See Funeral Mass)



# **NOTES ON CEREMONIAL ACTIONS FOR SERVERS**

## **GENUFLECTION**

The genuflection is the reverence generally required to an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

In genuflecting, the server starts from an upright position, and, without bending his body or head, touches the ground with his right knee exactly where his right foot was; he then rises at once.

## **PROSTRATION (Or Double Genuflection)**

The prostration is the reverence generally required to an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. Ordinary movements while working at such an altar require only a genuflection.

In making a prostration, the server first genuflects as above, and before rising, touches the ground with his left knee where his left foot was. Then, while kneeling on both knees, he makes a Low Bow as described below.

## **BOWS**

There are several kinds of bows, but for the general use of servers they can be put into three classifications.

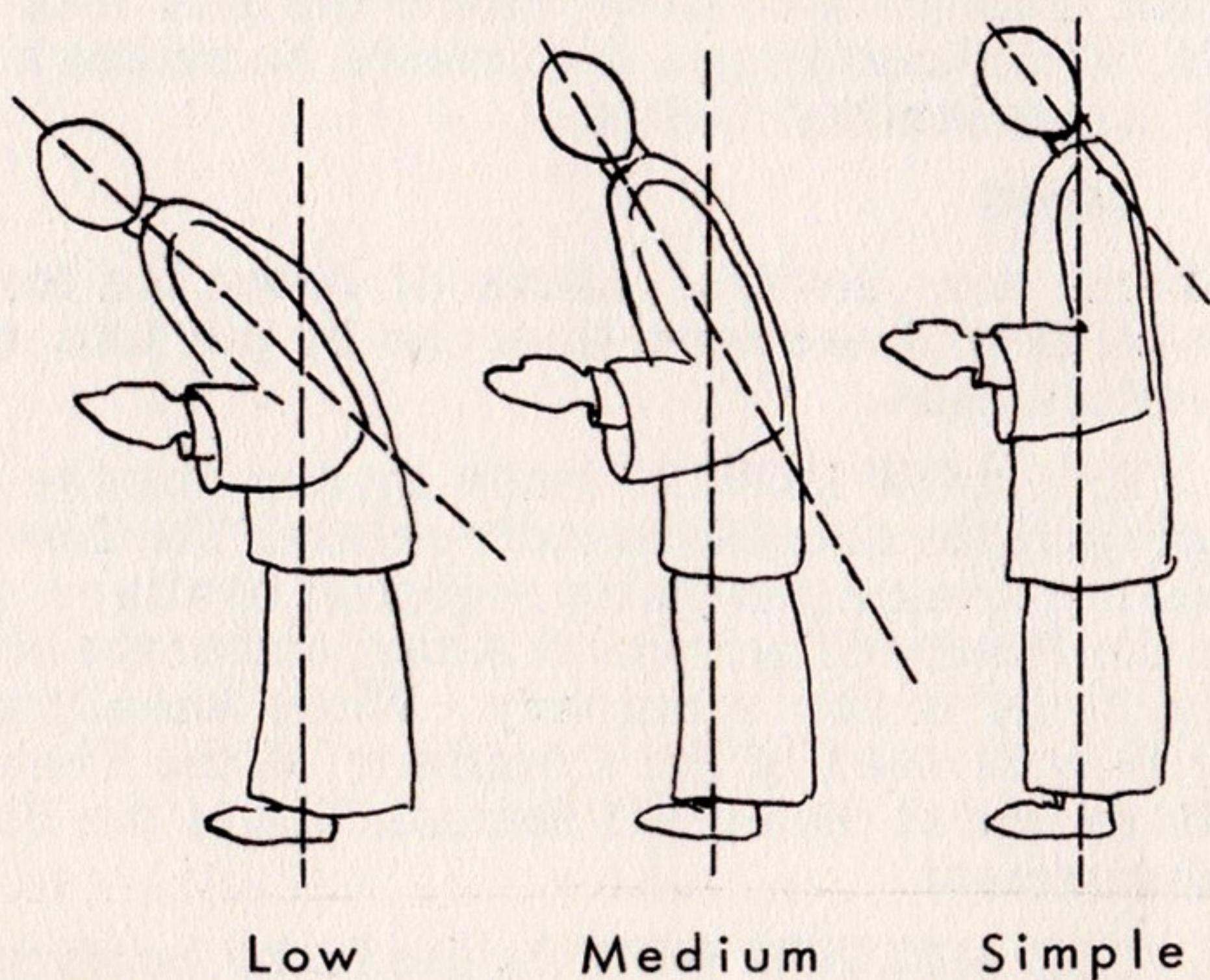
1. THE LOW BOW is made by bending the head deeply and the shoulders moderately. The Low Bow is the reverence generally required to altars other than the Blessed Sacrament Altar, and to the bishop when he is in the sanctuary. When kneeling, the Low Bow is used at the Confiteor, at the Elevation at Mass and at the actual Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

2. THE MEDIUM BOW is made by bending the head deeply and the shoulders slightly. This bow is made to greet persons of higher rank than one's



own. It is thus prescribed when the server bows to a priest.

3. THE SIMPLE BOW is made by bending the head but not the shoulders. The Simple Bow is used with certain phrases, for instance: at the Holy Name; the three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; "Let us pray"; and during the verses so indicated in the Gloria in Excelsis and the Creed, etc. When the server bows at the Holy Name or "Let us pray" he should, if standing, turn slightly to the altar cross, except during the Gospel. If sitting when the words are said or sung, he should bow without turning his head. The Simple Bow is used by the thurifer and servers before and after censuring, except that the thurifer uses the Low Bow when censuring bishops and the Medium Bow when censuring the clergy.



## BOWS



## **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

To make a simple sign of the cross, the server places his left hand under his breast; at the word "Father" he raises his right hand and touches his forehead with the middle fingers but without bending his head; at "The Son" he touches his breast above the left hand; at "The Holy Ghost" he touches his left and then his right shoulder; at "Amen" he joins hands in the usual manner. This is, of course, only one instance of the use of the sign of the cross.

In making the three small crosses as prescribed at the announcement of the Gospel, the left hand is first laid flat under the breast as above; the right hand, fully extended (with palm inward) and fingers pointed towards the left, is carried to the forehead, and with the left corner of the thumb (separated from the fingers) a small cross is traced on the forehead, touching the skin. The same action is repeated on the closed lips and on the breast.

## **HANDS**

While standing or kneeling, when the hands are unoccupied, they should be joined before the breast - palm to palm, the fingers pointing upwards, thumbs crossed. When one hand is used for carrying something such as the thurible, the other should rest flat on the chest. When sitting, the hands should be extended flat on the knees.

## **WALKING**

A server should always walk erect, at a moderate pace, and without gazing about. When he is walking with someone else, he should never talk, except when it is required.

When walking or performing any duties with another server, or in a group, the server should make a reasonable attempt to walk in step and to perform such duties in unison.



In passing an altar where mass is being celebrated:

1. If the Consecration is just taking place, the server kneels and makes a Low Bow; he remains kneeling until the chalice has been replaced on the altar, then rises and continues on his way.

2. After the Consecration but before the Communion, he genuflects on one knee.

### **TURNING**

1. When walking alone:

(a) A server should always turn toward the person or thing of greater dignity, e.g., the Blessed Sacrament, altar, bishop, celebrant. In case of conflict of dignity, he should decide in favor of the nearer; e.g., at the altar, he should turn toward it and away from the bishop or celebrant; at the throne, he should turn toward the bishop and away from the altar.

(b) When a server is free to turn either way, he should turn toward the right.

2. When walking with another:

Ordinarily, a server should turn toward the person with whom he is walking, except that under no circumstances should he turn his back on the Blessed Sacrament if It is exposed.

### **IN GENERAL**

A server's manner in the sanctuary should at all times be devout and dignified. He must remember that he is at God's Altar and is assisting the celebrant in offering to God an act of devotion, and at the same time, aiding (not interfering with) the devotions of the congregation by representing them



at the altar. All his actions should be moderately paced and never ostentatious. As the great Roman Catholic liturgist, Martinucci, has said of servers, "They should avoid too much precision or affectation, or such a bearing as befits soldiers on parade rather than churchmen. They must certainly do all gravely and regularly; but if they behave with too punctilious a uniformity the sacred functions look theatrical." A server's actions should never be so precise and regimented, so sloppy, disorganized or undevout, so slow or fast or jerky as to draw the attention of the congregation to them. In a sense, he should be the invisible man at mass.

## **SERVING AT LOW MASS**

### **GENERAL DIRECTIONS**

1. The server should remember that it is a great privilege to be allowed to assist at the Holy Mysteries. He must serve in strict accordance with the desires of the celebrant whom he is assisting, regardless of his own inclinations.
2. While serving one mass, the server should take no notice of anything that is done at another altar; for instance, the Elevation at a concurrent mass. If he is serving a private mass at a side altar, while a parish mass is going on at another altar, he rings no bells at all. The same rule also applies when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed elsewhere in the church.
3. Once vested, the server should not wander around the church except to perform certain prescribed duties.



4. The server always kneels or stands on the side opposite to the missal, except at the Last Gospel when it is read from the altar card.

5. Whenever, in the course of mass, the celebrant while speaking aloud, bows, genuflects, strikes his breast or makes the sign of the cross, the server, as far as possible, does the same.

6. The server must make all responses in a strong, clear voice that can be heard by the congregation, but he must keep his voice low enough so as not to intrude on their devotions.

7. The server always makes a reverence when passing in front of an altar - a Low Bow unless the Blessed Sacrament is there, when he genuflects; if the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, he makes a double genuflection upon arriving and leaving, otherwise a single genuflection. When he passes the Blessed Sacrament Altar on the way to or from some other part of the church he genuflects at the side. During mass, when he is already on one side of the altar and is moving further on the same side (for instance, when he goes from his cushion on the Epistle side to the credence table) he does not go to the center to reverence the altar, but goes directly to the side with no reverence. The server never genuflects on the predella (or platform), where the celebrant stands. If he must ascend the steps of an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, he should genuflect on the floor before ascending and after descending the steps.

8. When presenting the bread box and the cruets at the offertory, and at other specified times, the directions read for the server to stand on the top step. For altars with more than one step, the server stands one step below the predella, where the celebrant stands. If the altar has only one step, the server stands on the predella, a short space from the end of the altar.



9. The server should arrive at church in sufficient time to say his prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. He may use the prayers printed below.

He should also allow himself enough time after he vests and before mass to make certain that the cruets, bread box (if any) lavabo bowl and towel are all on the credence table; that the dust cover on the altar is removed and the missal stand placed on the Epistle end of the altar; and that the candles are lighted.

If the server lights the candles, the procedure is as follows:

Carrying the lighted torch, the server comes to the center of the altar, reverences, ascends the altar steps and goes to the Epistle side. He should stand in front of the candle as he is lighting it. If there is more than one candle to be lighted, the one nearest the center is lighted first. After the candles on the Epistle side are lighted, the server comes to the center, reverences with a simple bow, even if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved there, and goes to the Gospel side to light the candles in the same manner, starting with the one nearest the center if there is more than one. After the candles are all lighted, the server comes to the center, bows, descends the altar steps, turns and reverences the altar and returns to the sacristy.

The procedure in extinguishing the candles is just the reverse of lighting them, that is, the server starts on the Gospel side on the outside and works toward the center and then goes to the Epistle side and starts on the outside again.



## PRAYERS BEFORE MASS

"Accept, O Lord, my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my will. All that I am and have thou hast given me; and I give all back to thee to be disposed of according to thy good pleasure. Give me only the comfort of thy presence and the joy of thy love; with these I shall be more than rich and shall desire nothing more.

"I beseech thee, most dear Lord Jesu Christ, that thy passion may be my strength, to guard, protect, and defend me: that thy wounds may be my meat and drink, to feed, satisfy, and comfort me; that thy Blood may be sprinkled upon me to the washing away of all my sins: that thy death may be unto me life unfailing, thy Cross my everlasting glory. Herein let me find refreshment, rejoicing, healing, and gladness of heart, O Jesu.

"O my Jesus, grant that all thy blessed angels and saints, particularly. . . (here name the saint in whose honor mass is to be said). . . and, above all, thy glorious Mother, the Ever-Virgin Mary, who, face to face, behold thee, whom I intend here to receive beneath the sacramental veils, may bestow upon me the assistance of their prayers and intercessions, that I may in such manner receive thee here, in this place of exile, that I may hereafter, with them, enjoy thine unveiled glory in our true native land;

"O Almighty God, to whom Samuel ministered before Eli the priest, girded with a linen ephod; grant to us thy servants the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that, like him (and like thy blessed martyr Vincent), we may minister before thee with a loving heart and due reverence: through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen."



## **IN THE SACRISTY**

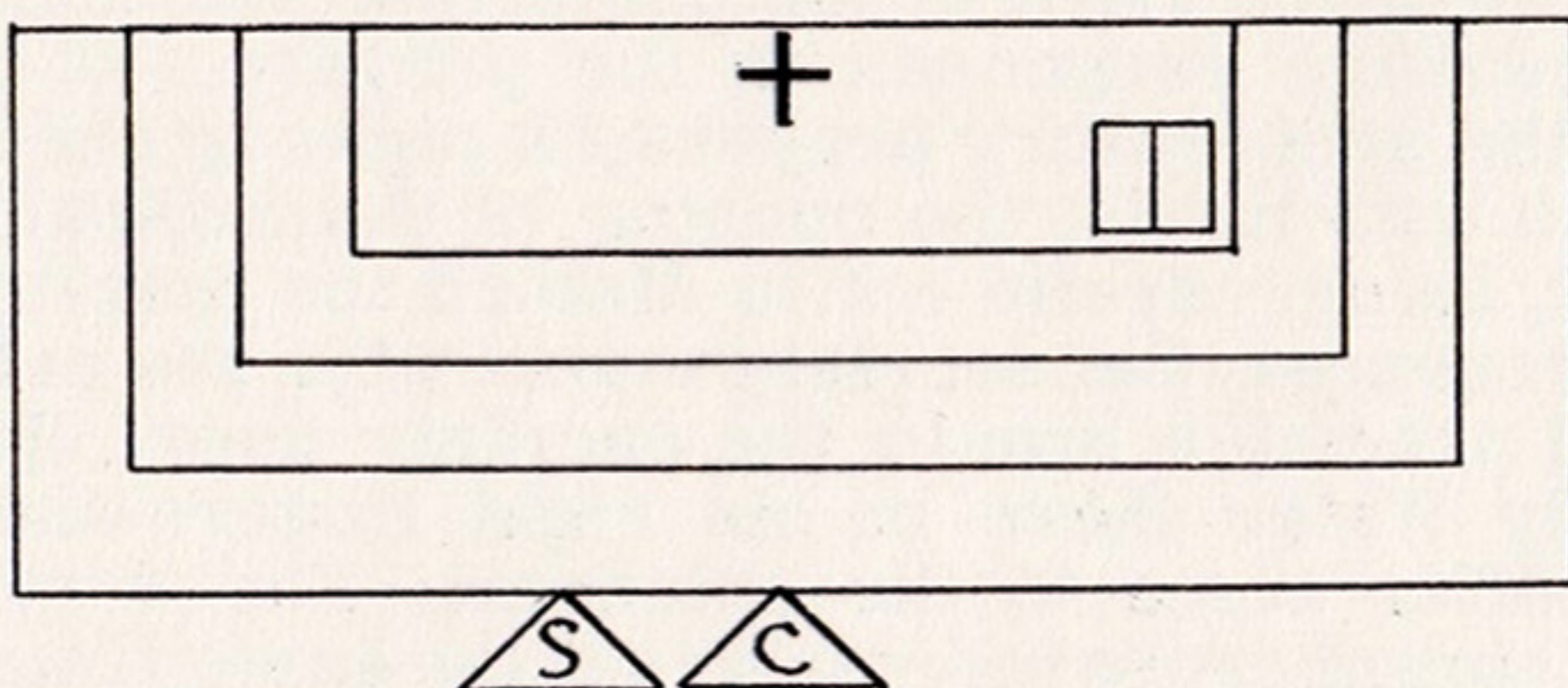
The server vests in cassock and clean cotta. He should never talk to the celebrant unless addressed by him, nor go into the priests' sacristy, unless invited, until just before time for mass to begin. (All talking should be kept to a minimum in any case, and done in a low voice.) When the celebrant starts to vest, the server should stand nearby in case he is needed; however, he should always wait to be asked for assistance. Several minutes before the time mass is to begin, the server should go and stand at the right of the celebrant. He makes the necessary responses to the prayers. At the end of the preparatory prayers, he picks up the missal with both hands, the opening of the missal on his left, being careful not to disturb the markers. He reverences the sacristy cross with the celebrant and precedes him to the sacristy door. He takes Holy Water there on his right fingers and turns to offer some to the celebrant. The server and celebrant cross themselves at the same time. They proceed to the altar, stopping to genuflect if they pass by the Blessed Sacrament Altar. The server rings the bell on the wall at the entrance to the chapel.

Upon arriving at the foot of the altar steps, the server moves slightly to the right, waits for the celebrant, takes the biretta in his right hand and reverences the altar with the celebrant. The server then puts the biretta on the credence table or in some other convenient place on the Epistle side, ascends the altar steps from the side and places the missal on the stand with the opening toward the crucifix, descends the side steps and returns to the center, reverences the altar, and kneels immediately on the floor just left of the center.

When the celebrant has opened the missal, he will return to stand just at server's right and begin the Preparation. The server will make the



responses as indicated below, using the same tone of voice as the celebrant. (Note: When the celebrant says the Confiteor the server does not bow nor does he turn toward the celebrant if the celebrant turns toward the server at the words "to you, brethren.") The server makes a Low Bow when he starts the Confiteor and remains bowed until after the celebrant has given the Absolution, "The Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, etc."



### **THE PREPARATION**

Cele. In the Name of the Father, (+) and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Cele. I will go unto the altar of God.

SERV. Even unto the God of my joy and gladness.

### **Psalm 43**

(This psalm is omitted in requiems and in ferial masses from Passion Sunday through Maundy Thursday, inclusive.)

Cele. Give sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.



- SERV. For thou art the God of my strength, why hast thou put me from thee: and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?
- Cele. O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.
- SERV. And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.
- Cele. Why art thou so heavy, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?
- SERV. O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.
- Cele. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
- SERV. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.
- Cele. I will go unto the altar of God.
- SERV. Even unto the God of my joy and gladness.
- Cele. Our help(+) is in the Name of the Lord.
- SERV. Who hath made heaven and earth.
- Cele. I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the Saints, and to you, brethren, . . . . . Therefore I beg Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, . . . . . and you, brethren, to pray to the Lord our God for me.
- SERV. (Turning slightly to the celebrant and making a Medium Bow.) Almighty God have mercy upon thee, forgive thee thy sins, and bring thee to everlasting life.



Cele. Amen.

SERV. (Facing the altar and making a Low Bow.) I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the Saints,  
(turning partly toward the celebrant)  
and to thee, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed,  
(striking his breast three times)  
through my fault, through my own fault, through my own most grievous fault. Therefore I beg Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, all the Saints,  
(turning partly toward the celebrant)  
and thee, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

Cele. Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to everlasting life.

SERV. Amen. (Server kneels erect.)

Cele. The Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon<sup>(+)</sup>, absolution, and remission of our sins.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us, O God?

SERV. That thy people may rejoice in thee.

Cele. Show us thy mercy, O Lord.

SERV. And grant us thy salvation.

Cele. Lord, hear my prayer.

SERV. And let my cry come unto thee.



Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

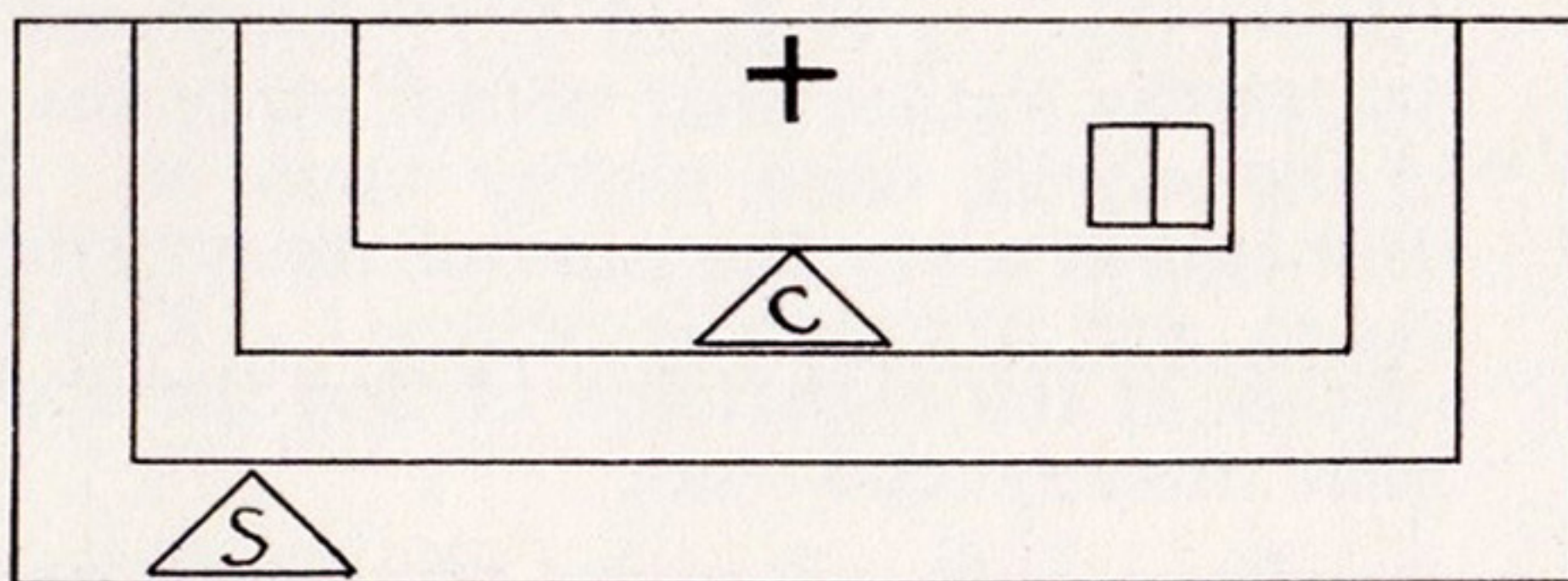
Cele. Let us pray. **Collect for Purity**  
Almighty God unto whom all hearts are  
open. . . . . through Christ our Lord.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. **Summary of the Law**  
Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith. . .  
. . . etc . . .

After the Summary of the Law, the celebrant ascends the altar steps and goes to the missal. The server rises and with no reverence to the altar, inasmuch as he is not passing the center, goes and kneels immediately on the first step on the Gospel side. The celebrant reads the **Introit** and the server makes the sign of the cross with him; he makes a Simple Bow at the Gloria Patri, but makes no response.

The celebrant comes to the center and the Kyrie is said as follows:



Kyrie



## KYRIE ELEISON

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

SERV. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

SERV. Christ, have mercy upon us (or Christe, eleison ).

Cele. Christ, have mercy upon us (or Christe, eleison ).

SERV. Christ, have mercy upon us (or Christe, eleison ).

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

SERV. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us (or Kyrie, eleison ).

If the **Gloria in Excelsis** is to be said:

Cele. Glory be to God on high.

Cele. )  
SERV. ) (Server still kneeling ) And on earth peace,  
good will towards men. We praise thee,  
we bless thee, we worship thee (Simple Bow),  
we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee  
(Simple Bow) for thy great glory, O Lord God,  
heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ  
(Simple Bow) ; O Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father, that takest away the sins  
of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou  
that takest away the sins of the world, re-  
ceive our prayer (Simple Bow) . Thou that  
sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the  
Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy  
Ghost, art most high in the glory (+) of God  
the Father. Amen.

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.



Cele. Let us pray.

***Collects for the day***

. . . . . world without end.

SERV. Amen. (After the first and last collects)

The celebrant then reads the **Epistle**, resting his hands on the missal. He will lift his left hand slightly to indicate the end of the Epistle.

SERV. (In an audible voice) Thanks be to God.

NOTE: On certain days, such as Ember days, there may be extra collects and lessons. At such times the celebrant does not say, "The Lord be with you," before going to the missal; and the server remains kneeling in his place on the Gospel side until all of these special collects and lessons are read. Before most of the Ember collects, the celebrant will say, "Let us pray. Let us bow the knee." The celebrant genuflects; the server replies, "Arise." The server answers "Amen" to all collects and "Thanks be to God" to all lessons. When the celebrant has read all the Ember collects and lessons, he will come to the center and say, "The Lord be with you," and return to the missal to read the collects for the day. Mass proceeds as usual.

As soon as the Epistle is read, the server rises, goes to the center, reverences the altar and goes by the long way around to the Epistle side, ascends the side steps to the top step (not the predella) and stands facing the celebrant while he finishes reading the **Gradual** and **Tract** or **Alleluia**.

NOTE: For certain masses there are also proper **Sequence Hymns**, namely: On Easter Day and throughout the Octave; on Pentecost and throughout the Octave; on Corpus Christi; on The Compassion of Our Lady and Our Lady of



Sorrows; at most requiems. On such occasions the server remains kneeling on the Gospel side until near the end of the Sequence Hymn.

When the celebrant goes to the center, the server goes to the missal, lifts the stand with one hand and steadies the missal with the other. He goes down the front altar steps diagonally to the floor in the center, reverences the altar, ascends the steps diagonally to the Gospel side and places the missal at a forty-five degree angle on the altar. He waits on the top step of the altar at the side. The celebrant comes to the missal.

### **THE GOSPEL**

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. The continuation (or beginning) of the Holy Gospel according to . . . . .

(With the celebrant, the server makes the small sign of the cross on forehead, lips and breast as previously described.)

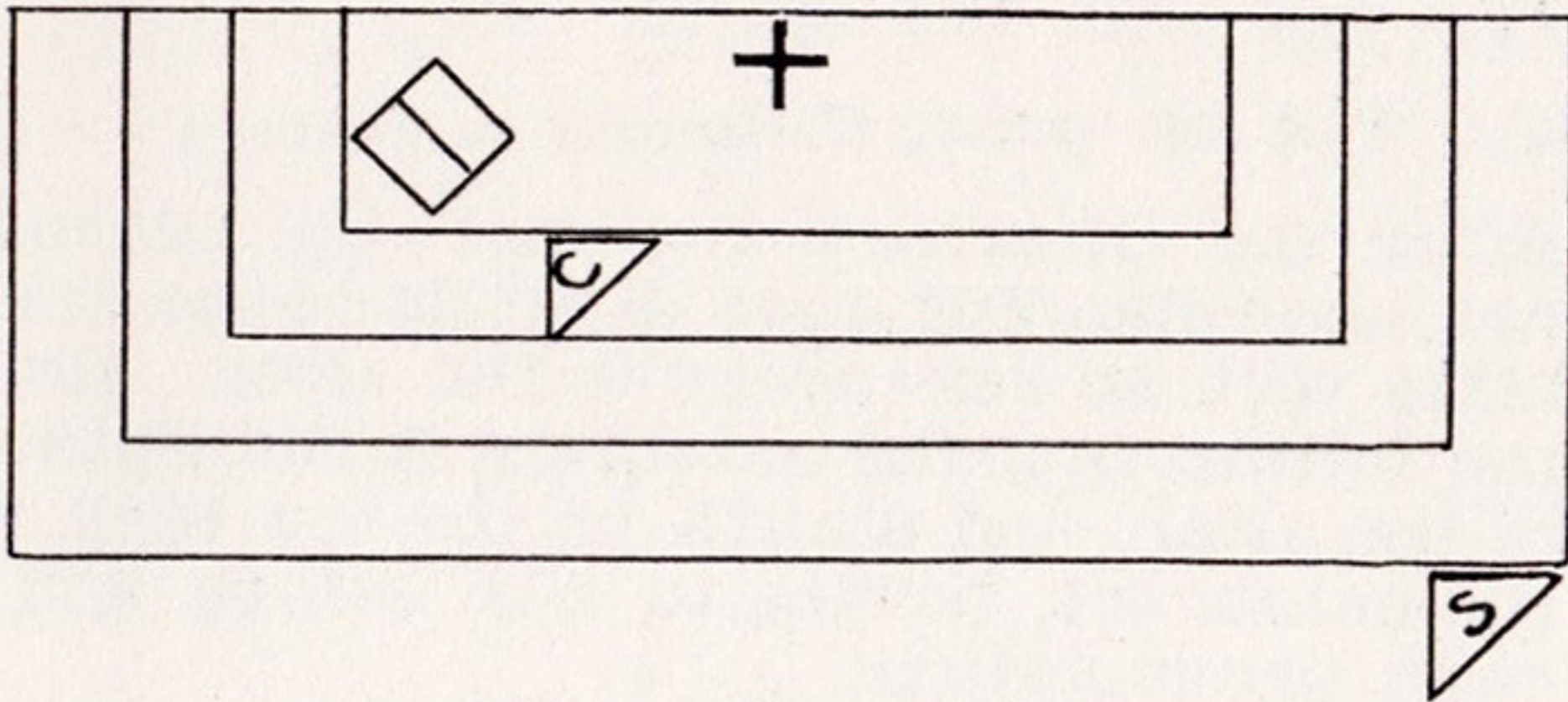
SERV. Glory be to thee, O Lord.

If the Holy Name is read at the opening of the Gospel, the server will make a Simple Bow. He then goes by the long way to his usual place on the Epistle side of the altar, reverencing the altar on the way, and stands facing the celebrant.

When the reading of the Gospel is completed (indicated by the celebrant's kissing the missal, except at requiems), the server replies:

SERV. Praise be to thee, O Christ.





## The Gospel

The server then turns and faces the altar.  
He remains standing.

If **The Creed** follows:

Cele. I believe in one God,

Cele. ) The Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and  
SERV.) earth, And of all things visible and invisible:  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ (Simple Bow),  
..... came down from heaven,  
(Genuflect) and was incarnate by the Holy  
Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made  
man: (Rise) And was crucified. ....  
Who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshipped and glorified (Simple Bow) ;  
Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe  
one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I ac-  
knowledge one Baptism for the remission  
of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of  
the dead: And the Life (+) of the world to  
come. Amen.

## THE OFFERTORY

The celebrant announces the mass inten-  
tions, and then:

Cele. The Lord be with you.



SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. Let us pray. (Offertory sentence )

After the Offertory sentence, the server, who has been standing, goes directly to the credence table with no reverence to the altar. He takes the following to the celebrant at the Epistle end of the altar, and stands on the top step, facing the celebrant, bowing to him before and after each presentation:

1. **The Bread Box.** The server opens the bread box and holds the lid in his left hand. While standing at the altar waiting for the celebrant, he quickly glances over the congregation so that he can tell the celebrant, in a low voice, the approximate number in the congregation.

NOTE: If mass is being celebrated at an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, there will be no bread box.

If mass is being celebrated at an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is not reserved but where a large number of Communions are likely to be made, a small ciborium will be prepared beforehand and the server will hand this to the celebrant. Inasmuch as the celebrant consecrates in this ciborium, the server will remove it to the credence table immediately after the Ablutions and bring it into the sacristy immediately after mass.

2. **The Cruets.** The server opens the cruets, placing the stoppers on the tray rather than on the linen, and picks up the wine cruet in his right hand and the water cruet in his left, with handles pointing away from him. When the celebrant takes the wine cruet, the server moves the water cruet to his right hand, receives the wine



cruet from the celebrant in his left. He holds the water cruet up slightly for the celebrant to bless (except at requiems) and then hands it to the celebrant. The server then moves the wine cruet to his right hand and receives the water cruet in his left. He returns the cruets to the credence table and covers the wine cruet immediately.

3. **The Lavabo.** The server immediately picks up the lavabo towel, placing it over his left arm; he takes the lavabo bowl in his left hand and the water cruet in his right. When the celebrant comes to him, the server holds the bowl under the celebrant's hands and pours a little water over the celebrant's fingers, turning toward the altar to offer the celebrant the towel on his left arm. He receives back the towel on his left arm, turns and bows to the celebrant and returns everything to the credence table, covering the water cruet.

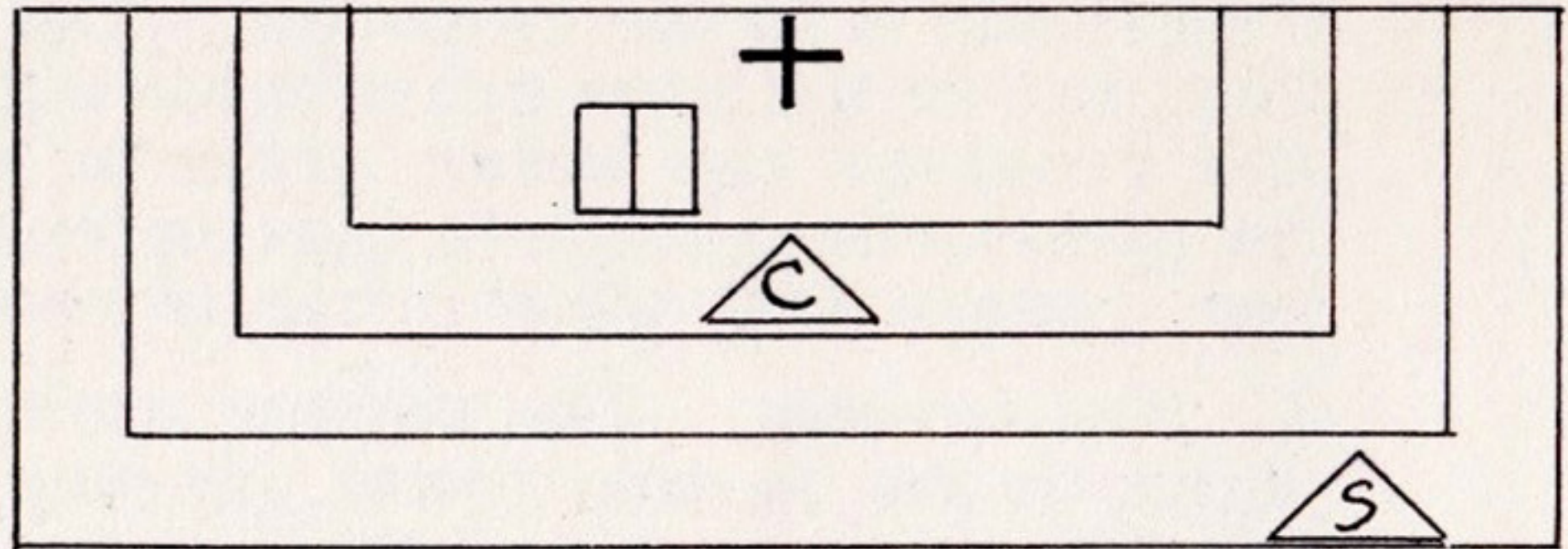
4. **Alms.** If the alms have been taken up by the sexton, the server goes to the center, reverences the altar, takes the alms from the sexton, ascends the altar steps just to the right of the celebrant (who is at the center). He holds the alms for the celebrant to bless, and then goes immediately (with no reverence) and places the alms on the credence table or other suitable place, returning then to his place on the lower step on the Epistle side, without going to the center.

Cele. Brethren, pray: that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.

SERV. (Kneeling wherever he is, even though still at the credence table.) The Lord receive this sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of his Name; both to our benefit and that of all his holy Church.



The server remains kneeling in his place on the step until time for Communion.



### **PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH**

Cele. Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church. Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us, etc. . . . Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake. Our only Mediator and Advocate.

SERV. Amen.

### **EXHORTATION, GENERAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Cele. Ye who do truly and earnestly, etc. . . . . and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

SERV. (He makes a Low Bow and remains so until after the Absolution. He leads the congregation in the General Confession, speaking in a clear voice and at a moderate pace. He must be sure that the congregation can hear him, keeping his voice at an even pitch. He must not shout or declaim, but must keep the speed moderate and steady so that the congregation can easily follow his lead; he must not let the prayer drag. In some parishes, the celebrant will lead the General Confession. The server will make a low bow and follow in an audible voice.)



Almighty God,- Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,- Maker of all things,- Judge of all men;- We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness,- Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, - By thought, word, and deed, - Against thy Divine Majesty, - Provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. - We do earnestly repent,- And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; - The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. - Have mercy upon us,- Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;- For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,- Forgive us all that is past;- And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please thee - In newness of life,- To the honour and glory of thy Name;- Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Cele. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; Have mercy upon you; pardon (+) and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SERV. Amen. (The server kneels erect.)

Cele. Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith, etc. . . . .

NOTE: At masses other than parish masses, or at late masses, when there are not likely to be communions, the celebrant may omit the Exhortation, General Confession and Absolution, the Comfortable Words, Prayer of Humble Access and Thanksgiving, (generally known as Communion Devotions). Then, if anyone presents himself at the altar rail at the time of Communions, the server will say aloud



the General Confession while the celebrant is making his own Communion and after the communicants have knelt at the altar rail.

### **THE SURSUM CORDA, PREFACE, SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS**

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. Lift up your hearts.

SERV. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Cele. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

SERV. It is meet and right so to do.

Cele. It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy, Father Almighty, Everlasting God.

(Proper Preface, if any, is inserted here.)

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying:

The server gently rings the sanctus bell three times at a moderate speed.

Cele. )  
SERV. ) Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, Heaven  
and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to  
thee, O Lord Most High.

(+) Blessed is he that cometh in the Name  
of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

### **THE CANON OF THE MASS**

Cele. All glory be to thee, Almighty God our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ



to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there ( by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; And did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue a Perpetual Memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

The server rings the bell once and makes a Low Bow.

Cele. For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took Bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, **THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU;** Do this in remembrance of me.

The server rings the bell three times:

1. As the celebrant genuflects the first time.
2. As the celebrant elevates the Host. (The server at the same time raises his eyes in adoration and says, silently, "My Lord, and my God.")
3. As the celebrant genuflects the second time

Cele. Likewise, after supper, he took the Cup: and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for **THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU, AND FOR MANY, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS;** Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

The server rings the bell three times:

1. As the celebrant genuflects the first time.
2. As the celebrant elevates the Chalice. (The server at the same time raises his eyes in adoration and says, silently, "My Lord, and my God.")



3. As the celebrant genuflects the second time.  
The server kneels erect.

Celebrant then continues with the Canon.

Cele. . . . . And although we are unworthy  
(the server strikes his breast once, gently), through  
our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any  
sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept  
this our bounden duty and service; not  
weighing our merits, but pardoning our of-  
fenses. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the  
Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto  
thee, O Father Almighty. World without end.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. Let us pray: And now, as our Saviour Christ  
hath taught us, we are bold to say: Our  
Father,

Cele.) Who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.  
SERV.) Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On  
earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day  
our daily bread. And forgive us our tres-  
passes, As we forgive those who trespass  
against us. And lead us not into temptation.  
But deliver us from evil. For thine is the  
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for  
ever and ever. Amen.

Cele. (Before the Fracture silently says the prayer,  
"Deliver us," ending with the words said aloud,)  
World without end.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

### **AGNUS DEI**

Cele. O Lamb of God,



Cele. )  
SERV. ) That takest away the sins of the world:  
have mercy upon us.

(The server strikes his breast gently.)

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins  
of the world: have mercy upon us.

(The server strikes his breast gently.)

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins  
of the world: grant us thy peace.

(The server strikes his breast gently.)

NOTE: At requiem masses, in the Agnus Dei are substituted the words, "Grant them rest " and "Grant them rest eternal," in place of, "Have mercy upon us " and "Grant us thy peace." The server does not strike his breast.

Cele. We do not presume to come to this thy  
Table, etc. . . . . and our souls washed  
through his most precious Blood, and that  
we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. (In a low voice) Lord, I am not worthy: . . .  
Lord, I am not worthy: . . . . . Lord, I  
am not worthy: . . . . .

The celebrant -- but not the server -- strikes his breast three times. The server rings the bell each time the celebrant strikes his breast, then rises and goes around to the Epistle side of the altar without going to the center or reverencing the altar.

If he is to make his Communion, he genuflects when he gets to the Epistle side and goes to the top step and kneels. Otherwise, he does not genuflect, but kneels out of the way on the Epistle side. In all events he kneels facing across the sanctuary, not facing the congregation. He should not twist around or change his position once he is on his knees. The server should count the number of Communions, including the celebrant's.



As soon as the celebrant returns to the altar after communicating the people in both kinds, the server rises and goes to the credence table with no reverence to the altar. (But note, if the celebrant has been administering Communion from the Reserved Sacrament, the server should not rise until the Tabernacle door has been closed.)

The server uncovers the cruets and picks them up by their handles, the wine in his right hand and the water in his left. He goes directly up to the top step on the Epistle end of the altar, genuflecting before ascending the steps only if the celebrant has not yet consumed the Precious Blood in the chalice, or if the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the altar. (In the latter case, he turns and genuflects again on the floor, after descending the steps.) When the celebrant holds the chalice toward him, the server goes directly to the celebrant, bows and pours a little wine into the chalice until the celebrant makes a sign to stop. (A tablespoon of wine is usually sufficient.) The server then turns and goes back to his place on the top step. The celebrant will then come to the server, who bows and pours a little wine and then a slightly larger amount of water over the celebrant's fingers into the chalice. The celebrant will usually give the sign to stop by lifting the chalice slightly. The server bows, and returns the cruets to the credence table, covering them immediately.

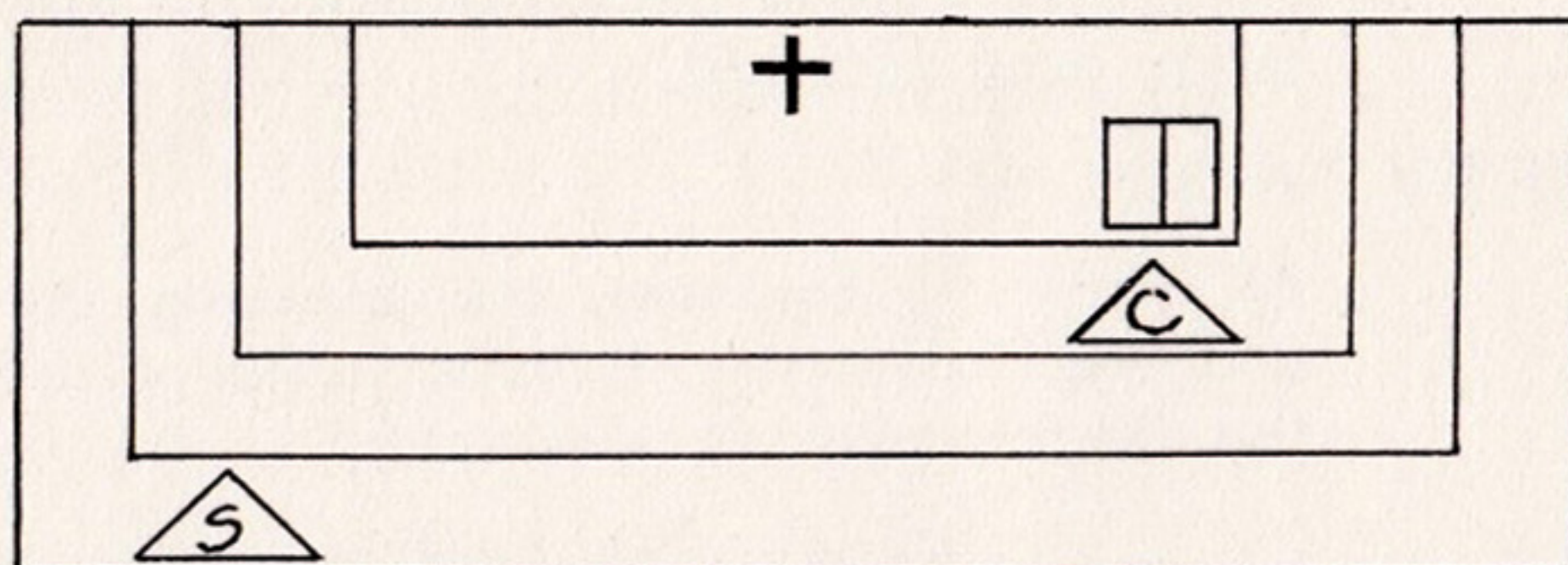
After the Ablutions, the server goes to the Gospel side by the long way, reverencing the altar as he passes the center. He ascends the steps from the side, picks up the missal and the stand and descends to the floor diagonally across the front. He reverences the altar, ascends the steps diagonally to the Epistle side and places the missal straight on the end of the altar. He then descends to the floor by the side steps and goes around and kneels immediately in his place on the Gospel side,



reverencing the altar again when he passes the center.

(Note: There is no necessity for the server to move the chalice veil from the Epistle to the Gospel side. It often hinders and almost never helps.

After covering the chalice with the veil the celebrant goes to the missal.



### General Thanksgiving

Cele. Let us pray. Almighty and everliving God, etc. . . . .and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end.

SERV. Amen.

NOTE: If there were no Communions, the celebrant will ordinarily omit the above General Thanksgiving.

### **Communion Verse and Postcommunion Collects**

Cele. (Reads the Communion Verse.)

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. Let us pray.(Collects) .... world without end.



SERV. Amen. (After the first and last Collects.)

### **Dismissal**

Cele. Depart in peace - or - Let us bless the Lord.

SERV. Thanks be to God.

Cele. The Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, (+) and the Holy Ghost be amongst you and remain with you always.

SERV. Amen.

NOTE: In requiems, the blessing is omitted and the following is substituted directly after the Postcommunion Collect(s):

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. May they rest in peace.

SERV. Amen.

### **THE LAST GOSPEL**

Immediately after the Blessing, the server rises and goes up directly to the Gospel end of the altar and stands on the top step as the celebrant approaches.

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. The Beginning of the Holy Gospel according to John.

The server makes the small sign of the cross on his forehead, lips and breast, as previously directed for the Gospel announcement.

SERV. Glory be to thee, O Lord.



The server bows to the celebrant, descends the side steps to the floor, goes to the center, reverences the altar, gets the biretta and then stands in his usual place on the Epistle side facing the celebrant.

Cele. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, etc. . . . . which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (Genuflect) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (Rise) , and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

SERV. Thanks be to God.

NOTE: If there is a Special or Proper Last Gospel, the celebrant will so indicate by leaving the missal open after reading the last of the Postcommunion Collects. In this case, as soon as he has made the response, "Thanks be to God," to the Dismissal, the server rises, goes to the center and reverences the altar. He ascends the steps diagonally across the front, picks up the missal and stand, and returns the same way. He should time his return so that he is just at the center to reverence the altar as the celebrant starts the Blessing. The server kneels in the center for the Blessing and bows, but does not cross himself. He rises immediately after the Blessing, ascends the steps diagonally and places the missal at the usual angle for the reading of the Gospel. He stands on the top step for the announcement of the Gospel and thereafter returns to the Epistle side as above.

When the celebrant comes to the center to get the chalice, the server ascends the altar steps by the shortest way and picks up the missal (but not the stand) in both hands with the opening towards his left, returns to the floor just to right of center to meet the celebrant as he descends the steps. Both reverence the altar, and the server hands the biretta



to the celebrant, holding it in his right hand with the middle horn of the biretta pointing toward the celebrant. The server precedes the celebrant to the sacristy, genuflecting to the Blessed Sacrament if he passes the altar where It is reserved. He bows to the sacristy cross, stands at the right of the celebrant at his vesting case for the concluding devotions, giving the required responses. He then bows to the celebrant and returns to the servers' sacristy.

The server must make sure that the candles on the altar are extinguished and that all the vessels are returned to the sacristy. After he removes his cotta and cassock, he should say his prayers of thanksgiving before the Blessed Sacrament, and how better could anyone end these devotions than with the Anima Christi, which every server should know by heart:

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O Good Jesu, hear me.  
Within thy wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from thee.  
From the malicious enemy defend me.  
In the hour of my death call me,  
And bid me come to thee,  
That with thy Saints I may praise thee  
For ever and ever. Amen.





## **APPENDIX**

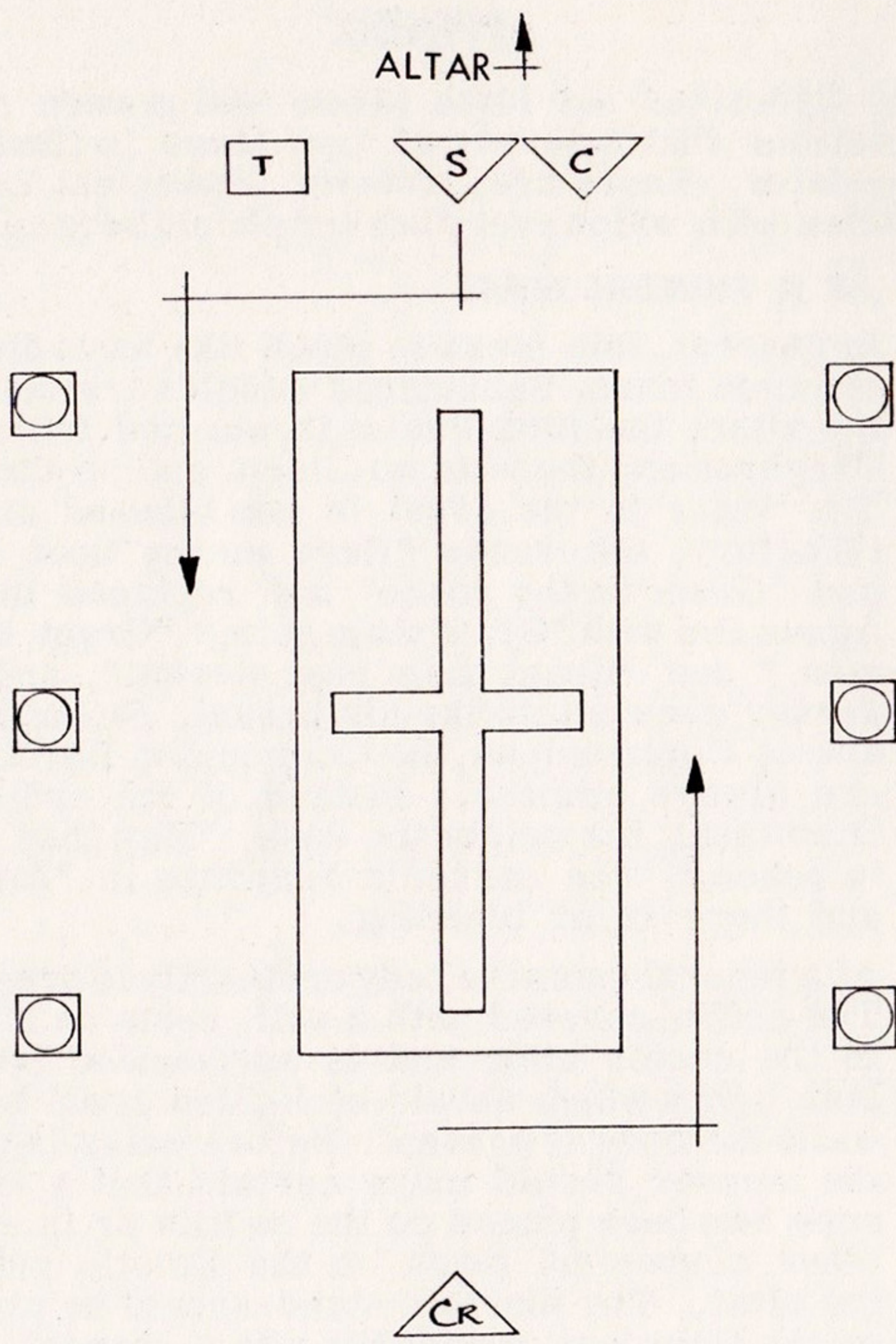
The directions set forth above will govern most situations that a server at Low Mass is likely to encounter. There are, however, additional ceremonies with which every server should be familiar.

### **AT A FUNERAL MASS**

In general, this mass is much like an ordinary requiem mass. Unbleached candles are used on the altar; the 43rd Psalm is omitted from the Preparation; there is no Gloria and no Creed. The water in the cruet is not blessed at the Offertory; the words "Have mercy upon us " and "Grant us thy peace" are replaced in the Agnus Dei with "Grant them rest," "Grant them rest " and "Grant them rest eternal"; and the server does not strike his breast. Since there are no Communions, the Communion Devotions are always omitted. Instead of the ordinary Dismissal, the celebrant says, "May they rest in peace." The server's response is "Amen" and there is no blessing.

At a funeral mass the body ordinarily is present. The coffin, covered with a pall, rests on a bier in the center aisle and is surrounded by six bier lights which should be lighted at all times while the body is present. Before mass begins, the server should make certain that a black cope has been placed on the sedilia or in some other convenient place on the Epistle side of the altar. The thurible stand should be placed on the floor just outside the altar (chancel) rail on the Gospel side. The holy water bucket and incense boat should be placed on the stand. Charcoal should be lighted at the last possible moment before mass begins (using a low flame) and the thurible should be in place in the incense room, so that the sexton can prepare it readily and bring it to the altar at the end of mass.





The Absolution



After the Last Gospel, the server will go directly to the sedilia, pick up the cope and wait for the celebrant. When the celebrant has come to the sedilia and, while he is removing his manipule and chasuble, the server will stand facing the celebrant and with his back to the congregation, holding the cope as a screen. When he is ready, the celebrant will put on the cope. Meanwhile the sexton will bring the thurible and hang it on the thurible stand. The second server, if one is available, will bring the black processional cross and stand facing the altar, at the far side of the bier, making certain that he has left enough room for the celebrant and server to pass readily between the cross and the coffin.

When the celebrant has assumed the cope, the server will precede him to the center. Both will reverence the altar and turn, and the server will go before the celebrant to the thurible stand and take his position at the celebrant's right, facing the congregation. At the conclusion of the Collect and Responsory, the server will open the incense boat and hand it to the celebrant. He will then remove the thurible from the stand, open it and face the celebrant. The celebrant puts on incense, the server says, "Bless, reverend Father," and the celebrant blesses the incense in the usual way. The incense boat and thurible will then be returned to the stand. The server will then take the holy water bucket while the threefold Kyrie is being recited as follows:

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us.

SERV. Christ, have mercy upon us.

Cele. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Cele. (Aloud) Our Father.

The remainder of the Lord's Prayer is said



silently by all; meanwhile the celebrant will take the sprinkler from the holy water bucket and turn with the server to reverence the altar. The server accompanies the celebrant, holding the right side of the cope with his left hand and carrying the holy water bucket in his right. He and the celebrant make the circuit of the bier as the celebrant sprinkles the coffin with holy water. When they pass in front of the processional cross(if one is used), the celebrant makes a Low Bow and the server genuflects. When they return to the altar end of the bier, the server returns the sprinkler and bucket to the stand and hands the thurible to the celebrant. The celebrant and server reverence the altar, and the celebrant censes the coffin, accompanied by the server, in the same manner as he has sprinkled it.

Having returned to the altar end of the bier, the server replaces the thurible on its stand and remains on the celebrant's right.

Cele. And lead us not into temptation.

SERV. But deliver us from evil.

Cele. From the gates of hell.

SERV. Deliver his (her) soul, O Lord.

Cele. May he (she) rest in peace.

SERV. Amen.

Cele. Lord, hear my prayer.

SERV. And let my cry come unto thee.

Cele. The Lord be with you.

SERV. And with thy spirit.

Cele. Let us pray. (Collect) . . . Through Christ  
our Lord.

SERV. Amen.



The server will then go and get the celebrant's biretta, and bring it to him. Together they will reverence the altar. The server then goes before the celebrant to the other end of the bier. After giving the pallbearers sufficient time to turn the coffin around, the procession to the door of the church begins, the celebrant reading "In Paradisum." The order of the procession is as follows:

Second server (if there is one) with  
processional cross  
First server  
Celebrant  
Pallbearers with coffin

At the door leading out into the porch of the church, the two servers and the celebrant will turn aside out of the aisle and stand facing the coffin until it passes. They will then proceed directly to the sacristy in the same order as above.

The server will return immediately to the altar and bring the veiled chalice to the celebrant in the sacristy before he does anything else.

NOTE: The above ceremony is considerably changed for the funeral of a baptised infant (under the age of reason). There are certain variations also in the ceremony required for the funeral of a priest.

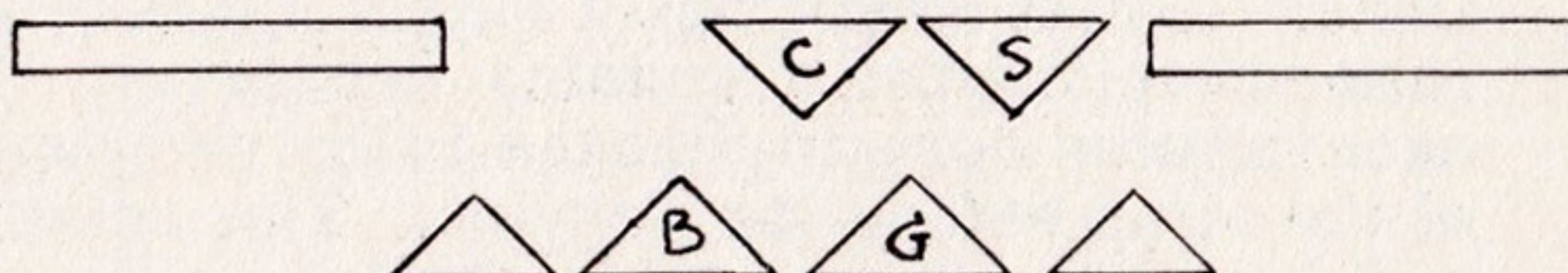
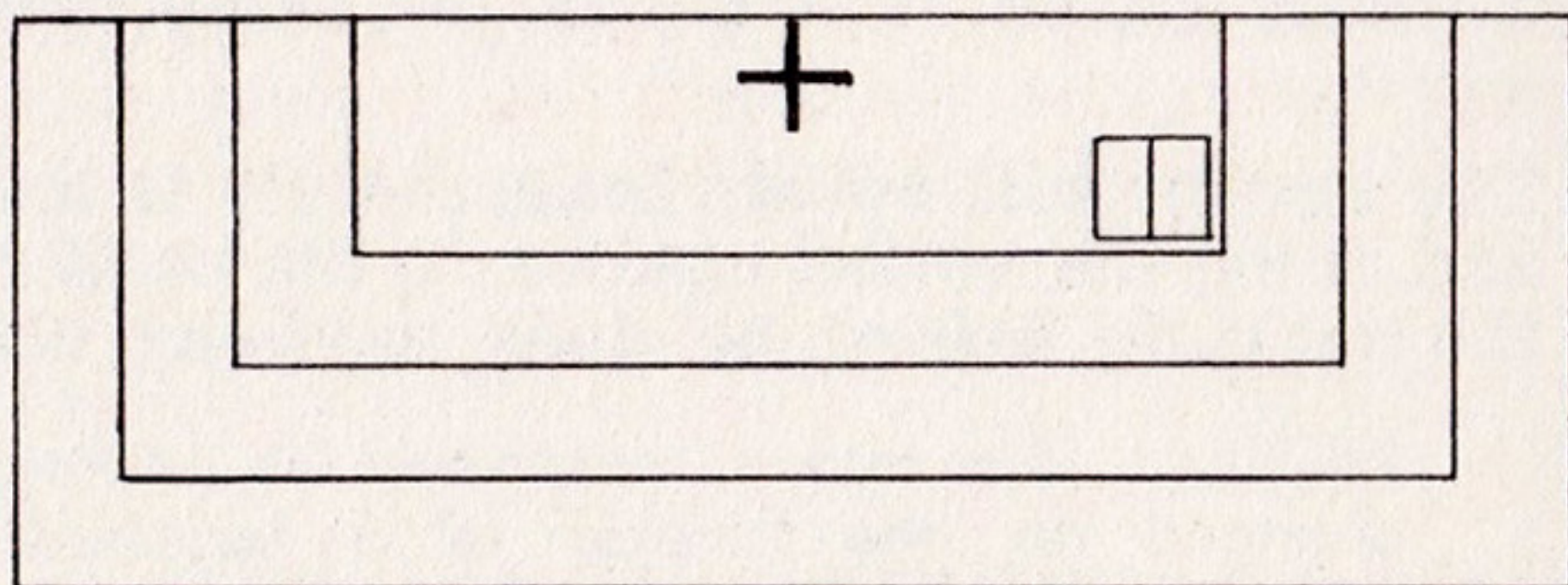
### **AT A NUPTIAL MASS**

Under normal conditions, a nuptial mass follows immediately after a wedding ceremony. This necessitates certain changes in the preparation of the altar before the service. The celebrant will have placed the veiled chalice on the altar and the server, after vesting, will have placed the missal on the missal stand and the maniple, holy water bucket and tray for the ring on the



credence table (or other convenient place on the Epistle side of the altar).

When the ceremony is to begin, the groom and best man will precede the server and the celebrant to the altar. The groom and best man take their places to the right and outside the entrance to the chancel. The server and celebrant reverence the altar and remain at the entrance to the chancel, the server holding the celebrant's biretta. All turn and stand facing away from the altar. Meanwhile the bride and her attendants will proceed to the altar from the porch of the church. When the bride arrives at the entrance to the chancel, the groom will turn and stand beside her in the center, facing the celebrant.



Betrothal



### ***The Betrothal***

While the betrothal vows are being made, the server will stand at the celebrant's left. After the words, "Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?" the celebrant and server turn and go to the foot of the altar steps, followed by the bridal party. All reverence the altar. The celebrant turns and faces the bride and groom while the server goes immediately to the credence table, puts down the biretta, and brings the holy water bucket and ring tray to the center.

### ***The Marriage***

After the bride says, "I give thee my troth," the server receives the ring on the tray, and he and the celebrant turn and go directly up the altar steps, reverence and go to the Epistle side. The server puts the tray on the altar and holds the holy water bucket for the celebrant to use in the blessing of the ring. After the blessing, the server puts the holy water bucket on the gradine and picks up the tray with the ring. He and the celebrant return to the center, reverence and descend to the foot of the altar steps.

When the marriage is completed, the bridal party will go with the celebrant to sign the register at a table previously prepared on the Epistle side. The server will go to the credence table, put down the tray and come and stand at the sedilia. After the register has been signed, the bride and groom will take their places at the prayer desks prepared for them. The server will hand the maniple to the celebrant and then precede him to the center. Both will reverence the altar and the server will then kneel on the floor directly to the celebrant's left for the Preparation. Mass continues with no variation in the ritual until after the Lord's Prayer.

At this point the celebrant will turn and read a number of special collects for the bride and groom. Thereafter, mass continues as usual until after



the Dismissal. Then, before blessing the people, the celebrant will go to the Epistle end of the altar and bless the bride and groom, using holy water from the bucket which has been left there for that purpose. He returns to the center for the regular mass Blessing. The Last Gospel is read as usual. The server picks up the biretta and the missal. The bridal party comes to the center; everyone reverences the altar; the celebrant and server turn and wait until the bride and groom have turned and started down the aisle before leaving the altar to go to the sacristy.

NOTE: On occasion the wedding ceremony will be performed without a nuptial mass. When this occurs, the celebrant will be vested in a cope and, of course, the missal will not be used. After the blessing of the ring, the server will continue to hold the holy water bucket when he returns with the celebrant to the foot of the altar steps. When the marriage is completed, after the ring has been put on, the bridal party will sign the register as above, and the bride and groom will then return to their places for final prayers and the Nuptial Blessing.

### **AT A LOW MASS SAID BY A BISHOP**

When a bishop celebrates low mass many extra ceremonies are permissible such as ceremonial vesting at the altar, the attendance of two chaplains, etc. However, since most bishops prefer a minimum of such ceremonies, only that will be dealt with here.

It is customary to place two additional candles on the altar for a bishop's mass. The server should see that this has been done.

All bows to a bishop should be Low Bows.

Before the collects the bishop may use the salutation "Peace be with you" instead of "The Lord be with you." The response is the same.



The bishop does not assume the maniple when he vests in the sacristy (except for a requiem mass). The server carries the maniple (as well as the missal) from the sacristy and holds it during the Preparation until after the bishop says, "The Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, . . . . . ." At this time (still kneeling) the server presents the maniple to the bishop.

Mass then proceeds as usual until immediately after the Ablutions when the server will replace the wine cruet only, pick up the lavabo towel and bowl and return to the altar for another lavabo as at the Offertory.

If the bishop wears a skull cap (zucchetto), he will remove it after the Sursum Corda. If he gives it to the server, the server will take it to the credence table and return it to the bishop before the Ablutions.

After the dismissal, the bishop may give the episcopal blessing as follows:

Bish. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

SERV. Henceforth world without end.

Bish. Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

SERV. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bish. The Peace of God, etc. . . . .

In the sacristy, after the concluding prayers, the bishop may turn and give his blessing to the server, who will kneel.

If, as is quite proper, the bishop is attended by two servers at mass, the second server moves the missal for the Gospel, holds the water cruet at the Offertory, holds the water cruet and bowl for the first lavabo (while the first server with the towel stands at his right); attends the bishop at the Last Gospel, moving the missal if there is a Proper Last Gospel.



Both servers should stand and kneel at the same time. When they both are to go to the credence table, they come to the center and reverence the altar together. If they are making their Communions, they come to the center, genuflect and kneel on the footpace in the center. After their Communions, they descend to the floor, genuflect, separate and go and kneel at the sides of the altar, facing each other across the sanctuary until all Communions have been completed. The first server will then get the cruets for the Ablutions. The second server remains on the Gospel side until after the second lavabo, at which time he moves the missal to the Epistle side.

On special occasions the bishop may be attended by one or two chaplains who will be in Orders. In such cases, a chaplain will carry the maniple for the bishop, both will attend him at the missal throughout mass, moving the missal as required. The server will give the cruets to the chaplain at the Offertory and at the Ablutions. A chaplain should assist, by holding the towel, at both lavabos.

### **COMMUNIONS OUTSIDE OF MASS**

For some serious reason it may be necessary to distribute Holy Communion outside of Mass. This ceremony, of course, will have to be held at the altar where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, and it requires the attendance of one server.

The server will vest in cassock and cotta. He will light two candles on the altar and place a set of bells on the altar step at the Epistle end. When the priest is vested in surplice and stole, the server will precede him to the altar. He steps aside at the foot of the altar, takes the priest's biretta and genuflects with him. The server then goes directly to the Epistle side of the altar, and kneels on the bottom step.



When the priest opens the Tabernacle door, the server rings the bell loudly enough so that people throughout the church will be warned that the Tabernacle is open. When the priest has placed the ciborium on the altar, the server will then lead in the General Confession.

After the Communion(s), when the priest has cleansed his fingers, he will give the usual mass Blessing. The server then comes to the center with the biretta, genuflects with the priest and precedes him to the sacristy.

The server extinguishes the candles and returns them and the bells to the sacristy before he removes his vestments.





## NOTES